Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (original) A method for transferring data, comprising:

receiving a request to transfer data;

determining whether a counter value equals or exceeds a threshold, the counter

value representing an amount of time; and

transmitting the data when the counter value equals or exceeds the threshold.

2.   (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving includes:

receiving a request to transfer data via one of a plurality of streams.

3.   (currently amended) The method of claim 2 wherein the determining includes:

determining whether a counter value associated with the one stream equals or

exceeds a threshold associated with the one stream.

4.   (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the threshold is programmable.

5.   (original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

setting the threshold to exceed a flow control delay.

6.   (currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

resetting the counter <u>value</u> after the transmitting.

7. (currently amended) A network device comprising:

a transfer request unit configured to generate a request to transfer data;

a rate limiter configured to control a rate at which data is transferred; and

an arbiter configured to receive the request and transfer the data at a rate

determined by the rate limiter<u>,</u>

<u>wherein the rate limiter includes:</u>

<u>a counter configured to track an amount of time between data transfers,</u>

<u>a first register configured to store a threshold value,</u>

<u>a comparator configured to compare the amount of time to the threshold</u>

<u>value and transmit a signal when the amount of time equals or exceeds the threshold value, and</u>

<u>a second register configured to receive the signal and clear an entry</u>

<u>indicating that a data transfer is permitted</u>.

8. (canceled)

9. (currently amended) The network device of claim [[8]] <u>7</u> wherein the threshold

value is programmable.

10. (currently amended) The network device of claim [[8]] <u>7</u> wherein the threshold

value is set to exceed a delay associated with a flow control signal.

11.   (currently amended) The network device of claim [[8]] 7 wherein the comparator compares the amount of time to the threshold value each cycle.

12.   (original) The network device of claim 7 wherein the arbiter transfers the data via one of a plurality of streams.

13.   (original) The network device of claim 12 wherein the rate limiter includes:

a plurality of counters, each counter associated with one of the plurality of streams and configured to store a value representing an amount of time between data transfers via the associated stream,

a first register comprising a plurality of entries, each entry corresponding to one of the plurality of streams and configured to store a threshold value,

a comparator configured to:

compare the counter values to the corresponding entries of the register, and

transfer a signal when one of the counter values equals or exceeds the threshold value of the associated entry, and

a second register comprising a plurality of entries, each entry corresponding to one of the plurality of streams and configured to receive the signal and clear a bit when the entry corresponds to the one counter value, indicating that a data transfer is permitted.

14.   (original) The network device of claim 13 wherein the comparator compares at least one counter value to the associated entry of the register every cycle.

15.   (original) The network device of claim 13 wherein the threshold value of each of the entries is set to exceed a delay associated with a flow control signal.

16.   (original) The network device of claim 12 further comprising:

a transfer register comprising a plurality of entries, each of the entries being associated with one of the plurality of streams and configured to store a data transfer permission bit.

17.   (original) The network device of claim 16 wherein the arbiter transfers data for a particular stream based on the data transfer permission bit associated with that stream.

18.   (original) The network device of claim 12 wherein the plurality of streams includes 128 streams.

19.   (original) A method for preventing a buffer overflow condition, comprising:

determining a delay associated with transmitting a flow control signal from the buffer to a device that transmits data to the buffer;

setting a threshold value to equal or exceed the determined delay; and

limiting transmission of data to the buffer based on the threshold value.

20.   (original) The method of claim 19 wherein the limiting includes:

comparing a counter value to the threshold value, the counter value representing

an amount of time, and

preventing transmission of data to the buffer when the counter value is less than

the threshold value.

21.   (original) The method of claim 19 wherein the device and buffer are connected

via a plurality of streams.

22.   (original) The method of claim 21 wherein the plurality of streams includes 128

streams.

23.   (original) A system for preventing a buffer overflow condition, comprising:

a register comprising at least one entry configured to store a threshold value, the

threshold value equaling or exceeding a delay associated with transferring a flow control signal

from the buffer to a device that transmits data to the buffer;

at least one counter configured to store a value representing an amount of time

since a previous data transmission to the buffer; and

a comparator configured to:

compare the amount of time to the threshold value, and

permit transmission of data to the buffer when the amount of time equals

or exceeds the threshold value.

24.   (original) The system of claim 23 wherein the device and buffer are connected via 128 streams.

25.   (original) The system of claim 24 wherein the register includes 128 entries and the counter includes 128 individual counters, each of the counters being associated with one of the entries.

26.   (original) The system of claim 24 wherein the counter contains 4 bits.

27.   (original) The system of claim 24 wherein the value in the counter is reset when data is transmitted to the buffer.

28.   (original) The system of claim 23 further comprising:

a second register coupled to the comparator and comprising at least one entry configured to store a bit indicating whether transmission of data is permitted.

29.   (original) A method for controlling a reading of data from a buffer, comprising:

tracking an amount of data read from the buffer;

determining whether the amount exceeds a threshold; and

reducing a speed at which data is read when the amount exceeds the threshold.

30.   (original) The method of claim 29 further comprising:

storing a value representing the speed in a register.

31.   (original) The method of claim 29 wherein the speed is programmable.

32.   (original) The method of claim 29 wherein the reducing the speed includes:

masking buffer read opportunities.

33.   (original) A network device comprising:

an output buffer configured to store data; and

a throttle controller configured to:

        track an amount of data read from the buffer, and

        reduce a speed at which data is read from the buffer when the amount of

data exceeds a threshold.

34.   (original) The network device of claim 33 wherein the throttle controller

includes:

a counter that tracks the amount of data, and

a mask register configured to store a value representing the speed.

35.   (original) The network device of claim 33 wherein the throttle controller reduces

the speed at which data is read from the buffer by masking out read opportunities.

36.   (original) A network device comprising:

means for receiving a request to transfer data;

means for determining whether a counter value exceeds a threshold, the counter

value representing an amount of time between data transfers; and

means for transmitting the data when the counter value exceeds the threshold.

37.   (original) The network device of claim 36 wherein the threshold is

programmable.

38.   (original) The network device of claim 36 further comprising:

means for setting the threshold to exceed a flow control delay.

39.   (original) A network device comprising:

a first flow control device comprising:

a transfer request unit configured to generate a request to transfer data,

a rate limiter configured to control a rate at which data is transferred, and

an arbiter configured to receive the request and transfer the data at a rate

determined by the rate limiter; and

a second flow control device comprising:

a throttle controller configured to:

track an amount of data read from a buffer, and

reduce a speed at which data is read from the buffer when the

amount exceeds a threshold.

40.   (original) The network device of claim 39 wherein the rate limiter includes:

a counter configured to track an amount of time between data transfers,

a first register configured to store a threshold value,

a comparator configured to compare the amount of time to the threshold value and

transmit a signal when the amount of time equals or exceeds the threshold value, and

a second register configured to receive the signal and clear an entry indicating that

a data transfer is permitted.

41.   (original) The network device of claim 39 wherein the throttle controller

includes:

a counter that tracks the amount of data, and

a mask register configured to store a value representing the speed.